1: Jochelson E-5 (1900-01) 1908 RY4 Koryak RY4

married with the Kamchadal. In olden times the Koryak on the border of the ancient Tungus-Koryak territory, near Tauysk, undoubtedly intermarried with the Tungus. Of late years the Reindeer Koryak of the Gishiga and Varkhalam Rivers have intermarried with Tungus women, and *vice versâ*. Since the close of the eighteenth century some of the Russianized Maritime Koryak of the Okhotsk Sea in the villages of Yamsk and Tumanskoye have intermarried with the Yakut.

Russo-Koryak half-breeds are found in the Russianized settlements of Nayakhan, Yamsk, and Tumanskoye, and in Russian villages of that region. The Koryak intermarried with the Chuvantzy and with the Yukaghir at the time when they were waging war with them, and took their women prisoners.

Mortality, Fecundity, and Extreme Age. — To get an idea of the rate of mortality among Koryak children, I copied from the records of seventy-one married women whose measurements we had taken, the number of their living and dead children. Of 278 births, 160 individuals lived, and 118 (42 per cent) were dead.[1] The ages of the dead children are not indicated; but, since about half of the mothers were not quite thirty years old, the children must have been young when they died. As everywhere, so among the Koryak, most of the children that do not survive die during the first year of their lives. This may serve as an explanation of the Koryak belief that children's souls are timid, and that therefore children are more subject than older persons to attacks from evil spirits. For this reason, children are placed under the special protection of the household penates.[2] Notwithstanding this, the mortality of children is enormous in comparison with that of civilized nations. This is the more remarkable, since the Koryak women nurse their children, and not infrequently continue to do so until the children are three years of age. As is well known, the great mortality in civilized countries among children in their first year is due to artificial feeding. It should be noted, in connection with the number of deaths among the Koryak children, that the records were taken by me just after an epidemic of measles, which had proved very fatal to children of all ages. The mortality of children is the same among the Reindeer as among the Maritime Koryak. Dividing the above number of children into two groups, according to their origin, I obtained the same coefficient of mortality in both groups. Apparently the difference in the mode of life of these two groups has no effect on the mortality in childhood.

In order to arrive at some conclusion concerning the fecundity of women, I singled out from the above number of women all those over thirty-nine years of age. Koryak women grow old at an early age, and forty years in most cases may be considered as the age-limit for procreation. Thus I found

[1] Still-births and miscarriages are not included here.

[2] See Part I, p. 101.

1: Jochelson E-5 (1900-01) 1908 RY4 Koryak RY

842 that twenty-two women of from forty years of age and over had 120 children, — one had 1 child; five had 3 children each; four had 4 each; three had 5 each; two had 6 each; one had 7; three had 8 each; one had 9; one had 10; and one had 11. If we assume that all these women are unable to bear any more children (which evidently cannot be said with certainty), we shall then have an average of 5.5 births of living children to every woman, a considerable coefficient of female fecundity.

Of the total number of women whose measurements were taken, 13 per cent had never borne children. However, a part of these women were the wives of bigamists both wives of whom were infecund, and in such cases the husband may have been the cause of the sterility.

145 805 The accounts given by some travellers, of the extreme age reached by the Koryak, are much exaggerated. We could ascertain the age of the Koryak only approximately, by judging from their appearance, for they themselves do not know their age.

When conversing with old people, we tried to call up some event of their childhood, or of some other period of their life, which had left an impression on their memory. For instance, we tried to ascertain who was the chief of the district at the time of a person's marriage. In most cases the recollection of a Koryak regarding the events in his life is extremely confused.

162 145 In making our records we found, out of 284 men, only 13 whom we judged to be more than fifty-five years of age, and but one very old man, a Reindeer Koryak. He was not less than seventy years old, according to recollections of his children, and he may have been older. He was no longer able to drive reindeer, and was brought to us by one of his grandsons. Old women are met with even less frequently than old men.

161 On the basis of the above data, it is difficult to give a definite answer to the question whether the tribe is increasing in numbers or not. I shall touch upon this point in Chapter III; but, speaking generally, the Koryak population at present is increasing in the intervals between epidemics and famines. Epidemics especially carry off the increase of many years. Some Koryak settlements, those which have been or are at present subjected to the process of Russianization, are perceptibly decreasing in numbers.

[164] There is no reason to suppose that the Reindeer Koryak — perhaps with a few exceptions — are decreasing in numbers. They come less in contact with the Russians and with civilization in general than do the Maritime Koryak; they are better provided with means of subsistence, and have therefore preserved to a greater degree their primitive energy, so indispensable in a struggle with the adverse conditions of arctic life. There is no doubt that the Koryak were not very numerous in the past. That which is now accomplished by diseases imported by the Russians was effected in olden times by wars and famines.

1: Jochelson E-5 (1900-01) 1908 RY4 Koryak RY4

The Koryak tribe, taken as a whole, is at present, after the Chukchee, the healthiest of all the tribes of northeastern Siberia. Of the influence of civilization upon them, I shall speak in the last chapter.

THE SENSES. — The Koryak discriminate between people of their own tribe and those of another by their smell. Thus, for instance, they cannot stand the smell of a Russian house or of a Tungus tent. And I can say for myself, that, after an intercourse of many years with various Siberian tribes, I was able to recognize the characteristic smell of a Yukaghir, a Tungus, or a Yakut.

Their vision is very keen. They are able to distinguish objects, and recognize persons, at a distance at which I can see nothing. Near-sightedness is rare among them; and one would hardly find among them an instance of looking through half-closed eyes, so characteristic of near-sighted people. I did, however, meet with two or three cases of near-sightedness. Such persons felt helpless, and did not go out hunting, nor did they drive the first sledge of a train.

The Koryak dislike salty and bitter things. While the Yukaghir, Yakut, and Tungus frequently came to us for salt, the Koryak seemed to feel no need for it. Those people to whom I gave mustard to taste expectorated for quite a while.

They are very fond of hard biscuit; but many of them prefer the fresh, slightly sour rye bread baked by the Russians of that locality, and which I carried with me in a frozen state in bags. Before meal-time they put the bread before the fire to thaw it out. The sour and pungent taste of putrid fish and decomposing meat seems to tickle the Koryak palate.

They are very fond of sweet things, and sugar is in the greatest demand among articles of exchange. They compare the taste of sugar to that of reindeer-fat, or to the taste of the marrow of the reindeer leg-bones.

The Koryak like fat in all forms; as, for instance, fish-oil, reindeer-fat, the blubber of sea-animals, and the fat of other animals, but they cannot consume it in such quantities as the Yakut consume melted butter. Excessive use of the blubber of the spotted-seal (*Phoca ochotensis*) produces vomiting; and many of them cannot bear the smell of the blubber of the male of the ringed-seal.

The Koryak distinguish the following colors, — black and dark blue (called by one name, nu'uqen), white (ne'lhaqen), red (naye'čeqen), green, light blue, and coffee-color (nota'lhayeqen), and yellow (mali'čeqen). When they are shown (for instance, on printed calico) the various colors intermediary between those enumerated, they class them among one or another of the above. Red is regarded as the most beautiful color. Faces with ruddy cheeks are considered handsome. Soft light-brown hair and brown eyes are valued as marks of feminine beauty. Dark eyes and coarse black hair in a woman are looked upon as signs of ill-nature.

1: Jochelson E-5 (1900-01) 1908 RY4 Koryak (RY

CLEANLINESS. — The Koryak can by no means be classed among cleanly people. With extremely rare exceptions, resulting from the civilizing influence of the Russians, they do not wash. The faces of children, as well as those of old people, are covered with a layer of dirt and soot mixed with fat, so that it is difficult to determine the natural color of their skin. Only the girls and young women washed their faces before coming to us to be measured. Mucus from the nostrils is almost always a decoration of the children, and the older people are frequently not far behind them in this respect.

The kettles in which the food is cooked are full of reindeer and dog hair, which fall from the clothes and fill the air of the Koryak house. The Koryak kill lice, which are regarded by them as properly belonging to a healthy man, with their teeth. There is a prevailing belief among them, as well as among the Yukaghir, that when a man is deserted by lice he will soon die. They eat also the large larvæ which develop from the eggs deposited by the reindeer-flies in the hair of the reindeer. No matter how putrid food may be, the Koryak have no aversion to it, and they will even drink the urine of persons intoxicated with fly-agaric.

DISEASES. — Among non-contagious diseases, the most frequent are derangements of the digestive organs, caused by irregular nutrition and the use of putrid fish and meat. Complaints of pain in the stomach are frequent, and the Maritime branch of the tribe especially suffer from the tape-worm. Tetter, scabies, and other skin-diseases, are very common, owing to their filthy habits.

Diseases of the eyes — such as inflammation of the lids, or an affection of the cornea — are widely spread. This is to be attributed to the action of smoke in the underground houses of the Maritime Koryak, and to the reflected light of the snow in the spring. People suffering from conjunctivitis and cataract are frequently met with; but I saw only three cases of blindness during my travels, and the three so affected were people of middle age. From the Report of 1884, by Dr. Uspenski, the district physician who visited some Koryak settlements and camps, there were found, in 70 houses visited, 14 persons suffering from cataract,[1] which is a large percentage.

The Koryak are not subject to nervous diseases to the same extent as other arctic tribes, though some are afflicted with symptoms of the two forms of nervousness so frequently met with in the Arctic region. These two forms are widely prevalent among the Yukaghir, Tungus, Yakut, and also among the Russian immigrants. They are generally known by the Yakut names of meryak and menerik; but there are specific names in all the languages of the arctic tribes, not only for these two diseases, but for their various symptoms as well.[2] However, it is probable that these two forms of nervous suffering are symptomatic manifestations of arctic hysteria.

[1] Taken from the Government Archives of Gishiginsk.

[2] A more detailed description of these diseases will be given in my work on the Yukaghir.

1: Jochelson E-5 (1900-01) 1908 RY4 Koryak RY4

158 ance. Even when they are in a normal condition, a twitching of the face is observable, and they have a haggard look and an uneven gait.

●164 Contagious and epidemic diseases find fertile ground among the Koryak as among other Siberian tribes. Even measles, which in civilized countries is generally confined to children, and is comparatively harmless, carries off large numbers of grown people among the Koryak.

Small-pox and measles appeared among the Koryak after they came in contact with the Russians. Small-pox is said to have appeared for the first time in the Okhotsk-Kamchatka territory about 1767. Since then it has been epidemic in that region several times. The contagion spread from Yakutsk or the Kolyma River; but, since intercourse between the bulk of the Koryak tribe and the Russians was not frequent until recently, small-pox did not rage in the interior of the Koryak territory to the extent that it did among other tribes. The last epidemic of small-pox occurred in 1895. It came from the Kolyma side, and claimed numerous victims among the Chukchee of the northern tundra; but the Koryak were affected very little by it.

Epidemics of measles are hardly less fatal. The last one was brought to the Koryak from Kamchatka in 1899. In some cases the havoc wrought by it was so great as to carry off a third of the population. Among the Reindeer Koryak of the Taigonos Peninsula, for instance, 97 persons, according to my record of families, died of it.[1] While the census figures of 1897 show that there were in all only 297 persons on the Taigonos Peninsula before the epidemic, the enumeration made by me after the epidemic gives 318 persons there.[2]

164 177 Like the Chukchee, the Koryak call syphilis the Chuvantzy or Yukaghir disease (atal or etel va'ırgin[3]), evidently because it was through these tribes that the infection was brought from the Russians. The Paren people call it also ,tagı'ta. In our travels among the Reindeer Koryak, as well as through

---

[1] To give an idea of the ravages of measles among the Koryak in 1900, I will cite here what I heard from a young Koryak employed as a herdsman by a wealthy widow, the sister of the Taigonos elder.

"Our tent stood alone on the shore of the Avekova River. There were ten of us. We all took sick, and could hardly drag ourselves about. Soon one after another died. Another herdsman and myself, both ill, drove the dead to be burned. Finally this herdsman, too, died. There were now three of us, — our mistress, another woman, and myself. Soon the other woman died. Alone I drove her a little way from our tent; but I had no strength to burn her, for I could not pick up the wood. I put the dead woman on the snow, killed the reindeer on which I had brought her, and placed him alongside of her. Then I plucked some alder-tree branches, covered the dead woman and the reindeer with them, and pressed them down from the top with the sledge.

"An awful storm was raging at the time. When I returned home, I found the tent had fallen down, and that my mistress was lying under the uprooted stakes of the framework. All alone, she had been unable to withstand the strong wind, and fasten down the falling tent. I drew her from under the tent, and with difficulty we pitched it again the best we could. Thus only two of us recovered. After that, I wandered about for several days to collect the herd, which had scattered in all directions."

In the summer of 1901 I sent this herdsman with my cossack to find the skull of the woman that had not been burned, but they could not discover it. Very likely the bears had carried off the corpse.

[2] For the difference between the figures 297 and 318 see Chapter III.

[3] By the name atal, or etel, as the Paren people pronounce it, the Koryak call the Chuvantzy as well as the Yukaghir.

1: Jochelson E-5 (1900-01) 1908 RY4 Koryak K74

the settlements of the Maritime Koryak, we often came across syphilitic patients; but all the cases were either in the tertiary stage or were instances of hereditary syphilis. From the Report of 1884, by the district physician Uspenski, I have taken the following interesting data: —

Syphilis developed, particularly during the seventies of the last century, in the Gishiga district. The Government then established a special hospital for syphilitics in Gishiginsk, where the Koryak went readily to be treated. In 1880 this hospital was closed, and syphilis spread more virulently.

Dr. Uspenski, on his inspection tour of 1884 over the Koryak settlements of the western shores of Penshina Bay, found in 91 houses 42 persons suffering from syphilis; among the Taigonos Koryak, 19 infected in 9 camps; and among the Reindeer Koryak of Opuka on the Palpal, 16 in 10 camps. Among the Alutor Koryak he did not find a single case: so that little nook on the Pacific had not been touched by the disease.

The idea is prevalent among the Russians, for some reason or other, that the presence of syphilis among the Koryak is due to the sailors of American whaling-vessels. This was the opinion of the chief of the Gishiga district[1] and of Dr. Uspenski in the above-mentioned report. In support of this opinion, Dr. Uspenski pointed out that, while he found among the Koryak near Gishiga numerous cases of syphilis in its contagious stage, on a wholesale examination of the cossacks and their families of Gishiga he discovered that five persons out of a hundred showed traces of former venereal disease, but not one of its contagious form.

Dr. Slunin also says that some settlements along the Okhotsk Sea, as Yamsk (Russianized Koryak) and Arman (Tungus), which were often visited by American whalers, have a bad reputation.[2] George Kennan also is of the opinion that the American whalers have imported syphilis to the Koryak of Penshina Bay.[3] However, I do not believe that the Koryak are exceptional among the Siberian tribes. All the tribes of northeastern Siberia, the Chukchee and Kamchadal among them, contracted syphilis from the Russians long before the appearance of American whalers in Bering and Okhotsk Seas. It is known, for instance, that among the Kamchadal syphilis was particularly widespread after the arrival (in 1799) of an infantry regiment under the command of Major-General Somoff at Petropavlovsk.[4]

There is another interesting feature in connection with the appearance of syphilis among the Koryak. As we shall see later, in the chapter treating

---

[1] See Government Archives of the Gishiga District, 1884, Case 1094.

[2] Slunin, I, p. 522.

[3] Kennan, Tent-Life in Siberia (London, 1870), p. 233.

[4] After the first visits to Petropavlovsk by foreign vessels, — namely, by the English expedition under Captain Cook, who had been killed not long before the visit, and by the expedition of the French navigator La Pérouse, — the Russian Government thought it necessary to put the port of Petropavlovsk under military administration.

1: Jochelson E-5 (1900-01) 1908 RY4 Koryak RY4

of family relations, the sexual relations of the Koryak, compared with those of their neighbors, are remarkably pure for a primitive tribe. This should make the possibility of infection through sexual intercourse rare. It is likely that the contagion spread simply through contact, in consequence of their lack of aversion to things eaten by others and of the excessive filth obtaining among them.

Leprosy, so widely spread among the Yakut, is not found at all among the Koryak. Slunin says that the Kamchadal also are exempt from it.[1] The Yakut, also Russian immigrants, half-blood descendants of Kamchadal and Russians or Yakut, and to some extent the Tungus, are subject to this disease. Personally I did not meet with a single instance of a Tungus affected by leprosy.

From time to time a contagious disease similar to grippe in its prolonged and severe form, accompanied with many complications, spreads among the Koryak, and each time it claims a few score victims. This disease was introduced by the Russians. At the time of my arrival at the Russian town of Gishiginsk (August, 1900), almost its entire Russian population, the cossacks included, were down with the grippe.

The remedies used by the Kamchadal are not used by the Koryak. In case of sickness they have recourse to shamanism, family charms, and incantations. They readily apply for help to a Russian physician or to travellers, whom they regard as shamans, and take their medicine gladly. Wounds heal with remarkable rapidity after they have been dressed, and antiseptics have been applied to them. The Koryak usually leave their wounds open, for they have not the necessary material with which to dress them. Hare's hair is frequently applied by them to a wound; but the hairs stick to it, and dirt accumulates, and it is surprising how the wounds heal at all under such conditions. By applying the proper dressing, we often succeeded in healing in a few days ulcers, cuts, and wounds from which they had been suffering for months.

MENTAL TRAITS. — There is quite a disparity of opinion among travellers in reference to the psychological and moral traits of the Koryak.

Krasheninnikoff says, "They are all exceedingly rude, irascible, ill-disposed, spiteful, and unmerciful;"[2] but in another place he says, "The Koryak are truthful, diligent, and endowed with a sense of shame."[3] On the same page he says that the Maritime Koryak are more courageous than their Reindeer brothers.

Dittmar says that the Koryak are "good-natured, honest, strictly truthful, and do not know deceit. But should any one offend their sense of honor, or insult them, their anger is lasting, and they seek to avenge themselves."[4]

[1] Slunin, I, p. 529. [2] Krasheninnikoff, II, p. 202. [3] Ibid., II, p. 203.
[4] Dittmar, Die Korjaken, pp. 26, 27.

22:Barrett-Hamilton and Jones--289-290 N-2 (1897) 1898 Koryak
116, 164, 177, 273, 609

"In both cases a request to be allowed to take photographs was readily complied with and permission granted to enter the dwellings. One old lady at Karaga, although quite blind, (1) left her balagan at our request, [290] descended the rickety pole-ladder which

1. The only other ailments noticed were lameness in the case of one young man at Karaginski, and a bad cough in the case of the old man at Karaga.

led to it, and posed herself for a picture. In both cases European stores of various kinds were preferred to money, and in the case of the islanders money was refused. Lastly, the people of the two villages [Karaga and a village on Karaginski Island--Analyst] were similar in their desire for strong drink, the word 'rhum' being a part of their somewhat limited European vocabulary."